

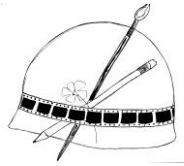
Fall 2014 PRRC Course Catalog

Anger Management.



Learn ways to avoid letting anger take control of your interactions. Avoid becoming angry in the first place and learn to recognize warning signs early and take measures to defuse tense encounters. The hope is that the veterans will decrease their overall arousal, feel they have more control over the challenging events in their lives, and be less likely to act in ways that either take them further from their goals or lead them to feel worse about themselves.

Art Guild.



Veterans work on their self-determined art projects in this art productivity class: 1) To take action steps toward full citizenship and community integration through the creative arts; 2) To visualize and actualize recovery goals through individual veterans' chosen means of artistic expression; 3) To improve physical stamina, manual dexterity and task-focused cognitive/affective processing; 4) To improve social skills by discussing and planning community integration around shared interests of class members; 5) To reduce stigma and isolation that may lead to relapse. Creative Arts Therapy staff and volunteers support mindfulness and problem-solving skills while encouraging Veterans in creating their art for exhibits in the community and the VA.

Art of Life.



Art therapy has a long history of helping people get better through the action of art-making. Art is a powerful tool to identify and process unresolved emotions that there may be no words for in talk therapy, but that get in the way of recovery. Class exercises help students refocus attention away from fears, pain and rumination into healthier engagement in expressive painting, line drawing, pastels, storyboards and collage. Students bring non-verbal thought and feeling patterns to awareness, improving their emotional expression, creating visual "maps" to their recovery goals.

Community Mindfulness



This is a registered community living skills training series of 11 three-hour classes. The purpose is learning, practicing and photographing mindful recovery in the real time SF community outside the VA hospital. Each session begins with an orientation to active "lens cap off" mindfulness techniques integrated with digital photography. Veterans will each have a unique staff coach assigned for recovery support during the session. We will choose a destination, get on MUNI and then go take photos in SF for 2 hours. This class will provide wellness-oriented, socially-engaging, sustainable here/now experiences to sharpen mental focus and spotlight the present. **Registered class**

Dual Recovery.



This class focuses on alcohol and substance abuse recovery as it relates to mental health recovery. Class will discuss veterans' recovery process, and get feedback from one another. Facilitator of this class is in recovery and has a dual diagnosis himself. The basis of the class is that recovery is possible.



Ending Self Stigma.

The goal of this class is to help individuals who are living with serious mental illness overcome internalized stigma, and move towards goals that important to them. The class is based on cognitive-behavioral therapy and recovery approaches, with an emphasis on the cultivation of the self “outside mental illness.” Key topics include: stigma and stereotypes, internalization and automatic thoughts, strengthening the self, dealing with discriminatory behavior, and increasing connection with others.



Healthy Living

Self-care is defined as activities that people undertake with the goal of enhancing health, preventing disease, limiting illness, and restoring health. This class aims to educate veterans about how to make decisions and engage in activities to keep themselves physically and mentally fit. We will also talk about ways to stay healthy and to develop healthy habits.



Heart of Recovery.

Are you ready to recover? This class will explore your readiness to recover while helping to prepare you for the development of meaningful recovery plans that will allow you to design and build a life of your choosing.



Let's Go!

The objective of this course is to provide and increase opportunities for community integration. It is also intended to empower veterans to organize and lead their own group meetings to discuss and plan community outings.



Man in Society.

Man in Society is a group for men exploring life from a deep sense of core values, committed to developing a fuller sense of purpose in life particularly in modern society. **Registered class**



Med-Ed.

Medications can be a support to people in recovery and taking medications should be a choice, a genuinely patient-led approach which places the individual at the heart of decision-making We will discuss some of the basic concepts of psychopharmacology- how psychotropic medications work, potential side effects, how drugs and alcohol interact with medications and lifestyle choices to stay healthy. You will learn ways to establish a true partnership with your clinician, based on your values, beliefs, goals, and preferred approach to meeting challenges.

Mind over Mood.

Learn how to identify your own individual symptoms and manage warning signs of a relapse as well as cope with persistent symptoms and how to avoid alcohol and street drugs. Gain a deeper understanding of medication side effects and mood changes and how your thoughts can shape your moods.





Music Project.

The music support group is a recovery-oriented group with a focus on enhanced community integration. This is not a “get together and jam” type of group. Interested individuals meet individually prior to the possible start of the group to answer questions, discuss individual goals for the group based on one’s recovery plan with the group facilitator, and so forth. Weekly material and content is driven based on group need and goals. Weekly groups will consist of topics such as, but are not limited to the following: developing one’s “musical ear,” basic blues structures, the role of the drummer and bass player, the group performing “cover songs,” playing music as a group in the park, and/or creating and performing originals. **Registered class**



My Creative Life.

This class explores how active creative arts processes offer an adaptive pathway to building strengths and skills leading to better resilience and wellness in the community. Veterans may explore and discuss a variety of media including visual arts, writing, music, drama, dance, digital video, photography, etc.. Each Veteran will be supported in developing their own personal creativity goal and practice to do at home and/or in the community.



OWL- Optimal Wellness Living.

Steer yourself on the right track by joining this fun, enjoyable fitness based program. From a recreational standpoint, this program will focus on cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, core function, and flexibility while incorporating wellness principles of the mind, body, and spirit to get you WELL and STAY WELL! You will navigate through further education about various fitness domains so that you can identify and organize physical activities conducive to your needs. Plus, it will be great in developing social skills and build camaraderie amongst your peers. What have you got to lose?



Pathways to Recovery.

This class uses the journey as a metaphor to identify and use personal strengths to engage in the recovery process. It reinforces the idea that recovery is about changing our lives, not just our biochemistry.



Peer Support Group.

The group is led by two VA Peer Specialists, who are themselves in recovery. A different recovery focused dialogue will be discussed weekly based on group need and the use of a manual. This group is open to anyone who would like to participate. The group focuses on building upon ones’ strengths with a specific emphasis on further developing coping skills for everyday life.



Psychosis Support Group.

This is a support group for people who hear or see things that are not there, or have fears about things that are not true. The group shares tips on coping with these experiences, and discusses other topics of mutual interest such as relationships with loved ones. **Registered class**



Reading for Recovery.

This bibliotherapy class involves selected readings from the first-person recovery-oriented literature. Attendees will be asked to read and discuss selections from books and articles describing an individual's recovery stories. Some of the selections will be from the following: "I Never Promised You a Rose Garden," "The Center Cannot Hold," "An Unquiet Mind," "Free to Fly," and "Get Me Out of Here ." Reading and discussing recovery oriented stories can often inspire hope and serve to point out that recovery is real and possible. Veterans will also have the opportunity to create their own recovery story using a variety of media. **Registered class**



Seeking Sanctuary.

This class focuses on (non-denominational) spiritual issues. Class is led by the VA chaplaincy.



Skillful Emotions.

Do you frequently experience overwhelming emotion?

Do you go from great happiness to intense sadness to overwhelming anger without seeing clearly why? Do these unpredictable emotional changes affect your relationships? This 13 week class will cover these concepts and discuss coping skills and approaches to better manage our emotional life and relationships. Throughout the course there is an emphasis on using emotional mindfulness to enhance our relationships. Participants will be asked to practice skills outside of class.



Social Skills.

This class is based on a well-researched model of social skills training. The class provides an easy and fun way to learn about and practice expressive, receptive, and conversational skills involved in human relationships. The group focuses on training skills in the following areas: Conversation, Assertiveness, Conflict Management, Communal Living, Friendship and Dating, Health Maintenance, Work, and Coping Skills for Drug and Alcohol Use.



Speaking of Smoking.

A class designed to help vets reduce or quit smoking cigarettes.



Supported Hobbying.

Have you always wanted to pursue a hobby or an interest but never knew how to get started? This class will guide Veterans with varying interests find resources in the community. Class participants will use public transportation to visit the resources to learn more about the hobby and what it takes to engage in the activity.



Techniques in Role Recovery.

This course provides foundational material related to role recovery. There is an emphasis on ideas related to recovery of roles based on self-chosen goals, techniques learned across classes are related to the WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan), and discussion of DVDs presenting consumers who have achieved role recovery is fundamental. Also, various techniques (such as behavioral approaches to managing auditory hallucinations) are included. Role recovery rather than symptom reduction is an important emphasis.



Veterans Community Council.

The PRRC's Student Council exists to allow Veterans the opportunity to become "active participants" in the development and day-to-day operations of the program. This is an excellent opportunity to interact with other PRRC students and staff, aid in the development of new initiatives, and advocate for Veteran-centered care.



Veterans Story Corps.

Writers of all levels are welcome to attend the Veterans Story Corps. In this class, veterans work individually on a variety of recovery-oriented writing exercises to increase self-awareness and reduce tension while also increasing language arts and communication skills. Veterans are offered an opportunity to explore prompts including journaling, expressive writing, poetry, non-fiction, playwriting, and short stories about real topics relevant to their current challenges or personal goals. Group members are invited to practice their storytelling skills and share their writing with peers to gain support and further reflection. Anyone—from beginner to expert—is welcome to come and try their hand at Story Corps!



Wellness Management.

This class will provide knowledge on recovery strategies including practical facts about mental illness, how to build social supports, use medications effectively, cope with stress, problems and symptoms and get your needs met in the mental health system. Each class will build on the previous one, giving you the opportunity to enhance your knowledge each week while working on organizational and time management skills.



Wellness Music Box.

This class, related to the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), focuses on developing the use of music as a coping skill and daily maintenance tool. Specifically, by including music in your WRAP Wellness Toolkit and Daily Maintenance Plan you will practice ways to use music as a recovery tool in your everyday life.



Women Create.

Female veterans will be invited to discuss, share, visualize and actualize recovery goals through discussion of recovery concepts and through active creative expression. Class will encourage women to share aspirations and unique methods of creativity such as visual art, writing, and performing. Class will encourage mindfulness and support healthy social involvement through the discussion of shared interests of female veterans.

Registered class



WRAP Group.

This class is designed to guide you through the development of a Wellness Recovery Action Plan, or WRAP. This is a plan to help you in your mental health recovery, help you get well, stay well, and help you to create the life you want. This plan can also be useful when you are confronted with other stressful situations as well. You may not complete the entire plan in these sessions and that is OK. You will be encouraged to work on them at home or with other staff whom you feel comfortable with.